

STATE OF MONTANA  
**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**  
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION  
Criminal Records and Identifications Services Section

Steve Bullock  
Attorney General



302 N. Roberts, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
PO Box 201403  
Helena MT 59620-1403

Date: March 1, 2012

To: Requestors of federal criminal record background checks

From: Eleanor Cooperider, Business Operations Supervisor / *Eleanor Cooperider*

Re: Fee reduction

On behalf of Attorney General Steve Bullock, I am pleased to inform you that the U.S. Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has announced a reduction in the fee for federal criminal record background checks. This reduction affects fees for federal fingerprint-based background checks that are submitted for processing through the Criminal Records and Identification Services Section (CRISS).

Effective March 19, 2012, the fee for each federal background check for licensing, pre-employment, employment, and volunteers will be reduced by \$2.00. Fees for all other services will remain the same. The following table shows the change. Additionally, a revised Fee Schedule is enclosed for your reference.

Background check type*	Current fee	Fee Effective March 19, 2012
Federal fingerprint-based for licensing, pre-employment, or employment.	\$29.25	\$27.25
Federal fingerprint-based for volunteers (available only under the authority of NCPA/VCA)	\$25.25	\$23.25

*\*These include a Montana state background check. CRISS is required to conduct both a state and federal fingerprint-based background check when a federal fingerprint-based background check is requested; the fees above reflect this.*

Operational issues may arise with this fee reduction. For example, if payment for \$29.25 is submitted prior to March 19, but the background check is processed through the FBI on or after March 19, a \$2.00 overpayment will occur. This may result in significant expense for the Department of Justice to send a refund. To avoid refund situations, we are implementing the following solutions:

Solution 1: All federal background checks submitted with payment at the current fee will be processed up to Thursday, March 15. Following that date, any background checks received with payment not at the reduced fee will be returned to provide the customer the opportunity to send the correct amount.

Solution 2: Federal background checks may be submitted with payment at the reduced fee. These background check requests will be held for processing until Monday, March 19, when the reduced fee takes effect. This solution may result in a brief delay for return of the background check results. CRISS anticipates many customers will chose this option, which will create a brief high volume of background checks to be processed. CRISS will make every effort to process these backbround checks as soon as possible after March 19.

Approach for agencies with established billing accounts with CRISS or from the FBI bill: Background check processing and billing will continue as normal through Thursday, March 15. Until that date, billing will be at the current rate. No background checks will be processed on Friday, March 16. On Monday, March 19, background requests will be billed and processed at the reduced rate.

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. Our email address is [dojitsdpublicrecords@mt.gov](mailto:dojitsdpublicrecords@mt.gov) and phone number is 406-444-3625.

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**Revised Fee Schedule\* as of March 19, 2012**

- Fingerprinting Service (no background check conducted)** **\$ 5.00**  
This fee is for service provided at Criminal Records in Helena. Fee may vary if service obtained from other law enforcement agencies or private vendors.
- Name-Based Background Check (MT Only)** **\$10.00**
- Online Name-Based Check (CHOPRS)** **\$11.50**  
This is a Montana-Only check. Link is <https://app.mt.gov/choprs>. Fee is payable by debit or credit card or through provisions associated with a Registered User Agreement.
- Montana Fingerprint-Based Check** **\$10.00**  
Also known as WIN or State check. This is a fingerprint-based check of Montana records and seven (7) western states cooperatively sharing records with Montana—Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. All these states are members of the Western Identification Network (WIN). This fee does not include fingerprinting service (see above.)
- Federal Fingerprint-Based Check** **\$27.25**  
For background checks conducted for pre-employment, employment, and licensing purposes. This background check and fee includes the Montana (WIN) check, as required by the FBI. Statutory authority is required to conduct these checks. Please contact our office if there are questions regarding the statutory authority. This fee does not include fingerprinting service (see above.)
- Federal Fingerprint-Based Check For Volunteers** **\$23.25**  
For background checks conducted on "Volunteers," under the statutory authority of National Child Protection Act, as amended by the Volunteers for Children Act (NCPA/VCA). This background check and fee includes the Montana (WIN) check, as required by the FBI. Along with statutory authority, "Reason Fingerprinted" field must also state "Volunteer" and the role of the worker or volunteer. If "Volunteer" is not present in the Reason Fingerprinted field at the time the fingerprint card is submitted for processing, the full fee of \$27.25 will be assessed. (Fee adjustments will not be made if "Volunteer" was not present in Reason Fingerprinted filed at the time of processing; we will have already been charged the full fee by the FBI.) This fee does not include fingerprinting service (see above.)
- Combination Services**  
Fingerprinting service plus Fingerprint-Based background check as described above:
- \$32.25 for employment and licensing applicants**  
**\$28.25 for volunteers**  
**\$15.00 Montana Only**

\* These fees do not apply for services for fingerprinting or background checks for the purposes of Criminal Justice Employment or CJIN Terminal Security.

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